Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

2008-2009 Estimates

Part III – Report on Plans and Priorities

Table of Contents

Minister's Message 1

Management Representation Statement 3

Section I – Agency Overview 5

1.1 Summary Information 5

1.2 ACOA's Mandate and Responsibilities 6

1.3 Linkages between Strategic Outcomes, Priorities, Program Activities and Government of Canada Outcomes 9

1.4 Management Plans and Priorities 12

1.5 Risks and Challenges 14

1.5.1 ACOA's Response to the Changing Economic Landscape 14

1.5.2 ACOA's Key Risks 16

1.6 Expenditure Profile 18

Section II – Analysis of Program Activities by Strategic Outcome 21

2.1 Strategic Outcome 1 – Competitive and sustainable Atlantic enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size 21

2.1.1 Program Activity: Fostering the development of institutions and enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size 22

2.2 Strategic Outcome 2 – Dynamic and sustainable communities for Atlantic Canada 25

2.2.1 Program Activity: Fostering the economic development of Atlantic communities 26

2.2.2 Program Activity: Special Adjustment Measures 28

2.2.3 Program Activity: Infrastructure Programming 29

2.3 Strategic Outcome 3 – Policies and programs that strengthen the Atlantic economy 31

2.3.1 Program Activity: Policy 33

2.3.2 Program Activity: Advocacy 34

2.3.3 Program Activity: Co-ordination 37

Section III: Supplementary Information 39

3.1 Links to Additional Information 39

3.2 Tables 39

3.3 Other Items of Interest 41

Minister's Message

For more than two decades, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency has been working with its partners to build a more modern, productive and competitive economy in Atlantic Canada. Atlantic Canadians today are more entrepreneurial and more innovative, and continue to export increasing quantities of goods and services.

This *2008-2009 Report on Plans and Priorities* describes ACOA's continuing leadership in shaping the region's economic future, and outlines the Agency's priorities and goals for the next fiscal year. While its programs and activities have evolved over time, today's ACOA remains true to its original mandate of encouraging economic development by helping to create business and employment opportunities in communities, large and small, throughout Atlantic Canada.

Readers may notice that this document differs somewhat in style and content from reports issued in previous years. Along with several other federal departments and agencies, ACOA is participating in a pilot directed at developing reports to Parliament that are more concise and user-friendly. As a federal agency, ACOA remains committed to enhancing both the accountability and the quality of its reporting to parliamentarians and to Canadians.

In the year ahead, the Agency will continue to focus on three main areas of activity: enterprise development; community development; and policy, advocacy and co-ordination. This will be done with a special emphasis on initiatives that foster greater productivity and the commercialization of innovative technologies, in order to enhance the competitiveness of the Atlantic economy. This focus is consistent with the goals of the Government's *Advantage Canada* strategy.

Improving conditions for Atlantic Canadian industries and businesses means improving their global competitiveness and raising productivity levels. To that end, ACOA will continue to help drive increased innovation, commercialization and skills development through such programs as the Business Development Program and the Atlantic Innovation Fund.

The Agency intends to maintain its essential role in the co-ordination and development of the Atlantic Gateway, with the objective of enhancing international trade with emerging markets and helping to modernize our transportation infrastructure, thereby generating economic opportunities in Atlantic Canada.

ACOA will also lead trade development initiatives that increase the exposure of Atlantic Canadian firms in markets in the United States, Europe, Asia and the Americas, and will continue its work to raise the level of foreign direct investment in Atlantic Canada.

The Agency works with Atlantic Canadian communities to put in place the plans and strategic infrastructure they need to strengthen local economies and identify opportunities for sustained growth.

As it has done since its inception, ACOA will work with provincial governments, regional stakeholders and other partners to build a stronger economy by creating the conditions businesses and communities need to thrive and prosper. The Agency will remain an active advocate for the region's interests in Ottawa, thereby ensuring that federal programs respond to the needs of Atlantic Canada.

I am proud to lead a federal agency dedicated to the future of Atlantic Canada. I am confident that ACOA will continue to play an integral role as an effective partner in building a strong and dynamic economy in Atlantic Canada.

The Honourable Peter G. MacKay
Minister of National Defence and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Management Representation Statement

I submit for tabling in Parliament the 2008-2009 Report on Plans and Priorities for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA).

This document has been prepared based on the reporting principles contained in the *Guide to the Preparation of Part III of the 2008-2009 Estimates: Reports on Plans and Priorities and Departmental Performance Reports*.

- It adheres to the specific reporting requirements outlined in guidelines prepared by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.
- It is based on the Agency's Strategic Outcomes and Program Activities that were approved by the Treasury Board of Canada.
- It presents consistent, comprehensive, balanced and reliable information.
- It provides a basis of accountability for the results achieved with the resources and authorities entrusted to the Agency.
- It reports finances based on planned spending approved by the Treasury Board of Canada.

Monique Collette, President
Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Section I – Agency Overview

1.1 Summary Information

Raison d'être

The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) works in partnership with Atlantic Canadians to improve the economy of communities in the region and enhance the region's competitiveness. Working with partners in government, the private sector, academia and non-governmental organizations, ACOA seeks to advance economic opportunities and innovation in order to serve the needs of businesses, organizations, individuals and communities. This work addresses the Agency's mandate "... to increase opportunity for economic development in Atlantic Canada and, more particularly, to enhance the growth of earned incomes and employment opportunities in that region.
(Part I of the *Government Organization Act, Atlantic Canada 1987*, R.S., c G-5-7, also known as the *Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency Act*)

Financial and Human Resources

	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Financial Resources ($ millions)	328.2	321.9	288.9
Human Resources (FTEs)	757	726	711

Agency Priorities for 2008-2009

1. **Productivity**

Foster improved **productivity in Atlantic Canadian companies** through measures such as **research and development**, acquiring **advanced technologies** and investing in **business skills development**. To this end, the Agency will use existing programming to increase focus in these areas, particularly in sectors that are strategically important to the long-term success of the Atlantic region.

2. **Innovation and Commercialization**

Foster improved commercialization of innovative technologies, to increase productivity and competitiveness. The Agency will increase focus in this area to identify and pursue commercialization opportunities within the Atlantic Innovation Fund (AIF) portfolio.

3. **Balanced Approach in Rural/Urban Development**

In response to changing economic circumstances, **ACOA will continue to pursue strategies that support increasing opportunities in the region's rural and urban areas**, by investing in initiatives that will provide best value for investment while addressing community priorities.

4. Targeted Advocacy Areas ACOA will continue to **advocate the interests of Atlantic Canada** in order to ensure new government initiatives are responsive to the needs of Atlantic Canada through Advocacy Champion files.
5. Trade and Atlantic Gateway Building on past successes in trade, ACOA will reposition its efforts, **aligning them with the Government of Canada's Global Commerce Strategy and the related Americas Strategy, and will engage in activities that capitalize to a greater extent on emerging markets** such as Asian countries, e.g. China and India. **Continued co-ordination efforts to ensure that Atlantic Canada is well poised to benefit from the Atlantic Gateway**, which offers significant opportunities for long-term economic expansion in the Atlantic region.
6. Management Priorities **ACOA's management priorities** will focus on the Government of Canada's governance and accountability agenda, Public Service Renewal, Risk Management, Values and Ethics, and strategic planning that integrates human resources management with business goals and aligns talent with priorities.

1.2 ACOA's Mandate and Responsibilities

The Agency

Established in 1987, ACOA is the federal government department responsible for helping to build economic capacity in the Atlantic Provinces by working with the people of the region – in their communities, through their institutions and with their local and provincial governments and businesses – to create jobs and enhance earned incomes.

ACOA's head office in Moncton, New Brunswick, is home to branches responsible for Policy and Programs, Finance and Corporate Services, Human Resources, Communications, and Legal Services. The Agency has 36 regional and field offices in cities and towns across the four Atlantic Provinces. These are led by regional vice-presidents located in each provincial capital, who are responsible for the delivery of ACOA programs. Through its Ottawa office, ACOA ensures that Atlantic Canada's interests are reflected in both the policies and programs developed by other departments and agencies of the federal government.

Although the Agency's policies and program tools have changed since its inception, the overall goal of ACOA has always been to help the Atlantic region realize its full potential in terms of productivity, competitiveness, economic growth and standard of living. Modifications have been made to its financial support programs for SMEs but, essentially, its vision for Atlantic Canada (i.e. increased self-sufficiency and increased earned incomes) is still at the heart of the Agency's operations.

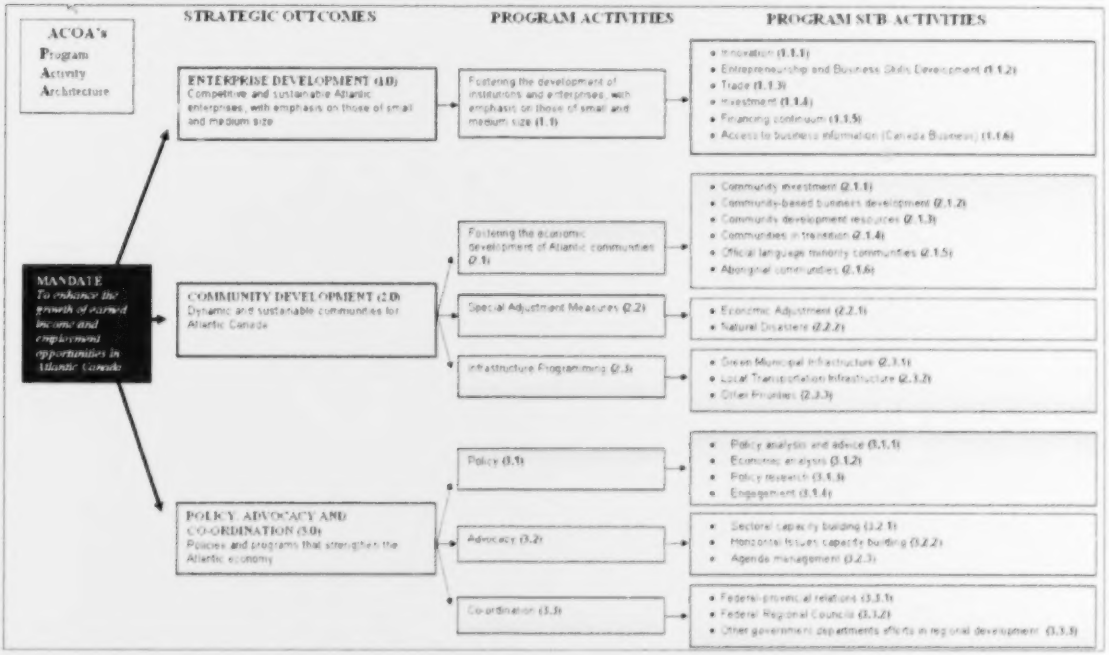
ACOA capitalizes on regional strengths by using a balanced approach to tackle economic development challenges facing Atlantic Canada. This is achieved by identifying and addressing structural weaknesses in the economy, helping communities and businesses overcome barriers,

and finding new opportunities for growth. It is also within this context that ACOA is committed to helping the region make the transition to a more innovative, productive and competitive economy.

In order to effectively pursue its mandate, the Agency aims to achieve the following strategic outcomes.

1. Competitive and sustainable Atlantic enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size.
2. Dynamic and sustainable communities for Atlantic Canada.
3. Policies and programs that strengthen the Atlantic economy.

The chart bellow illustrates ACOA's complete framework of program activities and program sub-activities, which contribute toward the Agency's three Strategic Outcomes.


ACOA's Program Activity Architecture
STRATEGIC OUTCOMES
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES
PROGRAM SUB-ACTIVITIES
MANDATE
To enhance the growth of earned income and employment opportunities in Atlantic Canada
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (1.0)
Competitive and sustainable Atlantic enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size
Fostering the development of institutions and enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size (1.1)
Innovation (1.1.1)
Entrepreneurship and Business Skills Development (1.1.2)
Trade (1.1.3)
Investment (1.1.4)
Financing continuum (1.1.5)
Access to business information (Canada Business) (1.1.6)
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (2.0)
Dynamic and sustainable communities for Atlantic Canada
Fostering the economic development of Atlantic communities (2.1)
Community investment (2.1.1)
Community-based business development (2.1.2)
Community development resources (2.1.3)
Communities in transition (2.1.4)
Official language minority communities (2.1.5)
Aboriginal communities (2.1.6)
Special Adjustment Measures (2.2)
Economic Adjustment (2.2.1)
Natural Disasters (2.2.2)
Infrastructure Programming (2.3)
Green Municipal Infrastructure (2.3.1)
Local Transportation Infrastructure (2.3.2)
Other Priorities (2.3.3)
POLICY, ADVOCACY AND CO-ORDINATION (3.0)
Policies and programs that strengthen the Atlantic economy
Policy (3.1)
Policy analysis and advice (3.1.1)
Economic analysis (3.1.2)
Policy research (3.1.3)
Engagement (3.1.4)
Advocacy (3.2)
Sectoral capacity building (3.2.1)
Horizontal issues capacity building (3.2.2)
Agenda management (3.2.3)
Co-ordination (3.3)
Federal-provincial relations (3.3.1)
Federal Regional Councils (3.3.2)
Other government departments efforts in regional development (3.3.3)

The Agency takes a proactive approach to identifying opportunities, recognizing that an economy must have a number of conditions in place in order to succeed. Apart from a solid record of program delivery to businesses and communities in Atlantic Canada since 1987, one of ACOA's greatest accomplishments has been to refine its supports and services to clients in response to evolving global and national circumstances.

At the national level, the Agency carries out its mandate by advocating for Atlantic Canada's interests, priorities and concerns in federal government policy-making decisions and investments that have a direct impact on the region's economy.

and finding new opportunities for growth. It is also within this context that ACOA is committed to helping the region make the transition to a more innovative, productive and competitive economy.

In order to effectively pursue its mandate, the Agency aims to achieve the following strategic outcomes.

1. Competitive and sustainable Atlantic enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size.
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The chart bellow illustrates ACOA's complete framework of program activities and program sub-activities, which contribute toward the Agency's three Strategic Outcomes.

The Agency takes a proactive approach to identifying opportunities, recognizing that an economy must have a number of conditions in place in order to succeed. Apart from a solid record of program delivery to businesses and communities in Atlantic Canada since 1987, one of ACOA's greatest accomplishments has been to refine its supports and services to clients in response to evolving global and national circumstances.

At the national level, the Agency carries out its mandate by advocating for Atlantic Canada's interests, priorities and concerns in federal government policy-making decisions and investments that have a direct impact on the region's economy.

At the regional level, ACOA conducts policy research and analysis that helps provide the intellectual foundation for a comprehensive and strategic approach to regional development. Furthermore, the Agency plays a key role in co-ordinating pan-Atlantic development strategies, programs and initiatives, to reduce duplication and maximize impact. The Agency also participates in a number of federal government horizontal initiatives, acting as the lead department for the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership, Team Canada Atlantic, and the International Business Development Program.

Locally, the Agency works with its partners to provide communities with the tools and resources they need to build stable local economies. Partnerships are an important mechanism in the development and delivery of policies and programs. ACOA partners with the private sector, universities, non-government organizations, as well as governments at all levels.

ACOA also works locally to improve the growth and competitiveness of enterprises. The Agency ensures that a wide variety of business development tools and resources are available to Atlantic Canadian entrepreneurs throughout all stages of the business life cycle – from the time they are thinking about setting up a new business, to the time they are planning for growth and expansion.[1]

Recognizing the correlation between innovation and productivity, the Agency places emphasis on fostering research and development, technology adoption, skills development and improved access to capital, which are all required to make these kinds of investments in innovation possible. The Atlantic Innovation Fund (AIF) continues to be a driving force behind the latest acceleration of research and development in Atlantic Canada.[2]

ACOA also recognizes the correlation between stimulating the growth of entrepreneurship and economic development, as illustrated by the fact that in the 1990s, 70% of the jobs created by new firms in Atlantic Canada were attributed to small businesses.[3] The Business Development Program and other ACOA programs are helping entrepreneurs to start up and expand businesses, optimize trade and export opportunities, develop new products, and improve business management practices to grow and compete in the global economy.

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[1] For more information on ACOA's activities and services, visit the Agency's website at http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/e/en/index.asp.

[2] Statistics Canada, *Survey of Intellectual Property Commercialization in the Higher Education Sector, 2004*, Catalogue no.88F0006XIE, no.11, October 2006.

[3] *The State of Small Business and Entrepreneurship, Atlantic Canada 2005*, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (2005).

1.3 Linkages between Strategic Outcomes, Priorities, Program Activities and Government of Canada Outcomes

Strategic Outcome 1: Competitive and sustainable Atlantic enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size.

Strategic Outcome Performance Measures

Performance Indicators	Targets
Increase in Atlantic GDP related to ACOA clients	*Five-year Target: (2004-2005 to 2008-2009)* $4 to $5 in GDP gains for every $1 of ACOA expenditure

2008-2009 Priorities

Foster improved productivity in Atlantic Canadian companies through measures such as research and development, acquiring advanced technologies and investing in business skills development. To this end, the Agency will use existing programming to increase focus in these areas, particularly in sectors that are strategically important to the long-term success of the Atlantic region.

Foster improved commercialization of innovative technologies, to increase productivity and competitiveness. The Agency will increase focus in this area to identify and pursue commercialization opportunities within the Atlantic Innovation Fund (AIF) portfolio.

In response to changing economic circumstances, ACOA will continue to pursue strategies that support increasing opportunities in the region's rural and urban areas, by investing in initiatives that will provide best value for investment while addressing community priorities.

Building on past successes in trade, ACOA will reposition its efforts, aligning them with the Government of Canada's Global Commerce Strategy and the related Americas Strategy, and will engage in activities that capitalize to a greater extent on emerging markets such as Asian countries, e.g. China and India.

Continued co-ordination efforts to ensure that Atlantic Canada is well poised to benefit from the Atlantic Gateway, which offers significant opportunities for long-term economic expansion in the Atlantic region.

Program Activity	Expected Results	Forecast Spending	Planned Spending			Alignment with Government of Canada Outcomes
		2007-2008	**2008-2009**	2009-2010	20010-2011	
Fostering the development of institutions and enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size	Improved growth and competitiveness of Atlantic SMEs	205.8	214.2	206.2	183.3	Strong Economic Growth

For more information on Government of Canada Outcomes click on the link: http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/dcgpubs/mrrsp-psgrr/wgf-cp_e.asp

To obtain further information, click on the Government of Canada outcomes or visit http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/dcgpubs/mrrsp-psgrr/wgf-cp_e.asp

Strategic Outcome 2: Dynamic and sustainable communities for Atlantic Canada

Strategic Outcome Performance Measures

Performance Indicator	Target *Five-year Target: (2004-2005 to 2008-2009)*
Increased capacity in community decision making, planning and delivery.	Evidence of impact resulting from evaluations.
Survival rate of rural businesses.	Stabilize or increase survival rate of rural businesses.

2008-2009 Priorities

In response to changing economic circumstances, ACOA will continue to pursue strategies that support increasing opportunities in the region's rural and urban areas, by investing in initiatives that will provide best value for investment while addressing community priorities.

Program Activity	Expected Results	Forecast Spending	Planned Spending			Alignment with Government of Canada Outcomes
		2007-2008	**2008-2009**	2009-2010	20010-2011	
Fostering the economic development of Atlantic communities	Enhanced business and economic opportunities for Atlantic Canada communities; Enhanced community collaborations	100.8	100.9	92.6	93.4	Strong Economic Growth
Special adjustment measures	Reduced impact of economic crisis	40.5	0.0	10.0	0.0	Strong Economic Growth
Infrastructure Programming	Enhanced infrastructure in urban, rural communities, and public infrastructure	5.1	0.9	0.9	0.0[1]	Strong Economic Growth

(1) See Section 2.2.3 for further details.

Strategic Outcome 3: Policies and programs that strengthen the Atlantic economy

Strategic Outcome Performance Measures

Performance Indicator	Target
Atlantic regional programs/initiatives implemented or adjusted as a result of ACOA policy, advocacy and/or co-ordination work	Continued government support of Agency priorities, collaboration with other federal departments, and engagement with other partners in Atlantic Canada in areas that will contribute to increasing the competitiveness of Atlantic Canada's economy.

2008-2009 Priorities

ACOA will continue to advocate the interests of Atlantic Canada in order to ensure new government initiatives are responsive to the needs of Atlantic Canada through Advocacy Champion files.

Continued co-ordination efforts to ensure that Atlantic Canada is well poised to benefit from the Atlantic Gateway, which offers significant opportunities for long-term economic expansion in the Atlantic region.

Program Activity	Expected Results	Forecast Spending	Planned Spending			Alignment with Government of Canada Outcomes
		2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	
Policy	Strategic, researched policy decisions reflecting the opportunities and challenges in the Atlantic region's economy, while considering enterprise and community development potential	7.7	5.9	5.9	5.9	Strong Economic Growth
Advocacy	Federal policies and programs that reflect Atlantic enterprise and community development needs and interests	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	Strong Economic Growth

Co-ordination	Co-ordination of other federal departments' and other stakeholders' policies and programs within the region to form integrated approaches to development	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	Strong Economic Growth

1.4 Management Plans and Priorities

Excellence in Management

ACOA's ongoing commitment to build and maintain management excellence and strong governance is focused on achieving an appropriate balance between what is achieved and how it is achieved, in keeping with the Government of Canada Management Accountability Framework (MAF)[4]. The MAF summarizes the management conditions necessary in any organization in order to be capable of delivering results to Canadians. ACOA is using the MAF as a foundational guideline in operational and strategic planning, to ensure that the ten framework elements are in place and working together well, as the foundation of solid organizational management. For the coming year, the priority areas upon which the Agency intends to focus include the following.

- The continued implementation and co-ordination of a strong governance and accountability framework[5] to ensure that ACOA remains focused on results, that its programs and policies remain relevant, and that the right decisions are being made to enable the Agency to fulfill its mandate.
- An enhanced capacity to collect and use performance information for informed decision making at all levels.
- An improved integration of the risks ACOA faces, and how best to mitigate them within the Agency's processes and programs.

Public Service Renewal

"Excellence in service" is a key element of ACOA's Public Service Renewal strategy. ACOA currently has an exceedingly capable workforce composed of well-educated, professional people, many with the potential to become the leaders of tomorrow. The Agency's corporate vision is to continue to have, within its people, the knowledge, skills and performance excellence required to effectively deliver on its mandate, strategic outcomes and business objectives, as well as to contribute to the Government of Canada's priorities. This vision is consistent with

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[4] http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/maf-crg/documents/booklet-livret/booklet-livret_e.asp

[5] http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/dcgpubs/mrrsp-psgrr/siglist_e.asp

the *Fourteenth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on Public Service of Canada*[6], in which the Clerk of the Privy Council stressed the importance of maintaining a public service that is relevant and central to the governance and development of this country.

It is important to note that the Agency is not "beginning from scratch." ACOA has been encouraging all employees to identify their career goals and to develop personal learning plans that address their training and development needs, regardless of whether their goal is to be the best at what they do or to become a future leader in the public service. ACOA's priorities for 2008-2009 include the following.

- To ground its public service renewal activity within its Integrated Strategic Plan[7], which brings together ACOA's mission and corporate vision by articulating the Agency's high-level, planned directions for the coming years, its current and future human resource needs, and the management imperatives for the organization to achieve its operational goals.
- To enable employees to plan their careers with ACOA and develop learning plans that address the gaps in their skills, knowledge and expertise, through an understanding of the competencies required for management and service delivery excellence.
- To provide employees with training and learning opportunities to ensure the attainment of the Agency's strategic business and corporate goals through excellence in the delivery of programs and services.
- Through succession planning, to focus human resource development on strengthening the capacity to develop current workers to move upward and horizontally, recruiting experienced professionals and bridging students, while being mindful of opportunities to enhance the Agency's employee equity profile.

Values and Ethics

ACOA will continue to highlight the importance of public service values as the foundation for ethical behavior, by keeping the practice of designating an executive "Champion" and profiling values and ethics through internal communications. The federal Employer's Code of Conduct has been drafted and is currently going through approval stages. Once finalized, ACOA will be in a position to develop its own Code of Conduct. A comprehensive communications strategy and employee information sessions will support the launch of the Agency's new code.

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[6] http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca/index.asp?lang=eng&page=information&sub=publications&doc=ar-ra/14report2007/14threport_e.html

[7] This document is laid out to reflect the five steps to integrating business and HR planning as outlined in *Integrated Planning: A Handbook for Deputy Ministers and Senior Officials*, 2nd edition, March 2007.

1.5 Risks and Challenges

1.5.1 ACOA's Response to the Changing Economic Landscape

ACOA operates within the changing economic landscape of Atlantic Canada. The Agency's broad-based approach to regional economic development addresses the underlying structural challenges in the economy.

Being proactive in identifying opportunities requires the Agency to assess external economic factors that can affect departmental plans and priorities or the delivery of its programs and services.

Assisting the development of economic opportunities for the region's businesses, individuals and communities continues to be the main challenge facing ACOA. Guided by the federal government's comprehensive long-term economic plan, *Advantage Canada*, the Agency's plans and priorities, as well as the delivery of its programs and services, reflect the economic environment facing Atlantic Canada.

The following provides an overview of Atlantic Canada's economic outlook, challenges and opportunities. Further information on Atlantic Canada's economy in 2007 is detailed in Section 3.3.2 of this report.

Economic Outlook

As oil and gas production stabilizes, economic activity in Atlantic Canada is expected to moderate in 2008, with real GDP increasing by 2.0%. Commodity prices are expected to remain strong, and the mining sector should continue to be a significant source of growth in the region. The completion of several large-scale investment projects in the region should result in very little growth in the construction sector in 2008. Economic activity in the services-producing industries should remain positive in 2008.

Economic growth in Newfoundland and Labrador is expected to slow significantly in 2008, attaining 1.5%, as oil production stabilizes. Continued gains in metal mining are expected, as iron ore mining and Voisey's Bay production remain strong and output from the new Duck Pond copper/zinc mine increases significantly. The Prince Edward Island economy should register growth of 2.0%, led by the manufacturing sector, as construction activity is expected to remain weak. Growth in the Nova Scotia economy should attain 2.2% in 2008, mainly due to the resumption of growth in the manufacturing and construction sectors. Real GDP in New Brunswick is expected to increase by 2.2%, with stronger growth in mining offsetting weaker activity in construction as major projects wind down.

The main risks to Atlantic Canada's short-term economic outlook are external, namely a more pronounced slowdown in the American economy and the high value of the Canadian dollar.

Recent volatility in financial markets related to sub-prime mortgages has tightened credit conditions for consumers and businesses, while the correction in the U.S. housing sector is ongoing and could have a broader impact on the United States economy. There is also a risk that the U.S. dollar could depreciate further against the Canadian dollar, in response to global current account imbalances, posing additional challenges to Atlantic Canada's export sector.

Economic Challenges, Risks and Opportunities

Over the medium and long terms, the Atlantic region will face several challenges as it attempts to ensure an even higher standard of living for the region's inhabitants. The considerable rise in the Canadian dollar and high energy costs are factors that affect the global competitiveness of the region's manufacturing and resource-based firms. A repositioned Trade and Investment approach for ACOA will further increase exposure of the region's firms to various export markets in the United States, Europe and Asia, while ACOA's Atlantic Investment Strategy seeks to raise the level of foreign direct investment in Atlantic Canada. The Agency also remains a key player in the co-ordination and development of the Atlantic Gateway, which will facilitate trade flows, modernize transportation infrastructure, and lead to increased economic opportunities in Atlantic Canada.

Atlantic Canada remains Canada's most rural region, characterized by declining population levels and a lack of employment opportunities. A high level of out-migration from the region, along with low levels of fertility and immigration, remain concerns regarding the future supply of a skilled labour force. ACOA will continue to work directly with communities to strengthen decision-making capacity and aid in the diversification of local economies. It will also co-operate with provincial governments on immigration and population issues.

Despite the potential for economic opportunities associated with its rich oil and mineral resources and major projects, there are significant challenges in developing the provincial economy in Newfoundland and Labrador. Labour and skill shortages are being noted in various industries province-wide due to out-migration and the shrinking size of the replacement pool available to cover retirements and new employment opportunities. Historic economic mainstays, such as the fishery and forestry, are hampered by pressures such as high input costs, global competition and the strength of the Canadian dollar. These challenges are felt particularly in rural communities, where the local economy is often based on a single resource-based industry, and the shrinking workforce has a high proportion of unskilled and older workers.

Prince Edward Island's main challenges are to achieve further economic diversification through cluster development in the bio-resource, aerospace, information and communications technology, tourism, and wind energy sectors. These will be combined with key developments in the natural resources and transportation sectors. Human capital development, along with increased immigration, will be important levers of economic growth in both the short and long terms.

In Nova Scotia, the emergence of new sectors, including the financial and information technology sectors, bodes well for future job creation; however, labour shortages loom. Determining what skills will be required to support emerging industries, and then developing, attracting and retaining talent in these areas, will be a key challenge. Among the key challenges

facing the Cape Breton region is the seasonality of the labour force, which results in significant variances in labour force activity throughout the year. Other challenges include the level of out-migration, an aging population and a small export base outside traditional resource industries.

New Brunswick's manufacturing and resource sectors will continue to face significant challenges, including resource rationalization, a strong Canadian dollar and high input costs. Innovation and technology will be key factors for economic development, since they offer businesses the potential for improved productivity. A number of significant economic opportunities are currently on the horizon for New Brunswick, particularly relating to the energy and mining sectors. Access to skilled labour and stronger linkages between urban and rural communities will be crucial to maximize the benefits of these growth opportunities throughout the province.

While there is no single solution to ensure future prosperity, the key element of any solution is Atlantic Canada's productivity performance. Productivity is a crucial component of the region's competitiveness, along with other factors such as trade openness, taxation, product quality, market access and exchange rates. Productivity growth is the most important source of long-term economic growth and is the key determinant of long-run trends in both absolute and relative living standards.

Despite recent progress, labour productivity in Atlantic Canada remains below the level for Canada, which in turn remains below that of the United States and each of its regions. A number of factors that contribute to lower levels of productivity in Atlantic Canada fall directly into ACOA's mandate: lower trade exposure; less innovative activity; less research and development (R&D) spending; lower levels of worker training/managerial skills; and under-investment in machinery and equipment (technology adoption). Raising productivity levels requires higher rates of business investment in machinery and equipment, greater levels of research and innovation, more effort placed on developing a skilled and educated workforce, and more spending on infrastructure.

While measures to improve productivity take time to implement and take effect, ACOA will refine programming elements to better reflect the need to encourage more Atlantic Canadian companies to undertake productivity enhancements. Through the Business Development Program and the Atlantic Innovation Fund, the Agency will continue its efforts to support technology adoption by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), private sector R&D and greater institutional-private sector collaboration (commercialization) on new technologies. The Productivity and Business Skills program encourages SMEs to improve their competitiveness by investing in the development of technical, commercialization and management skills.

1.5.2 ACOA's Key Risks

The Agency has identified key risks and challenges that could adversely affect the organization's ability to meet its three strategic outcomes. The following provides a description of each of the Agency's key risks, as well as applicable mitigation measures the Agency will be undertaking.

Key Risks and Challenges	Risk Mitigation Strategy
Strategic Risk The risk that Agency strategies are not aligned with government economic objectives/policies, nor reflective of emerging economic development concepts, thereby leading to opinions that the Agency is redundant.	The Agency will ensure that programming is aligned with government economic objectives and that promising concepts and approaches used in other jurisdictions are considered for application in Atlantic Canada. Actions will include the alignment of clear strategies with established government direction, advocacy efforts and the consideration of best practices from other jurisdictions.
Cost of Doing Business Risk Risk that the cost of doing business escalates and represents an increasing portion of the Agency's budget, adversely affecting operational efficiency and leading to budgetary pressures for programming.	The Agency will undertake initiatives that identify ACOA's core program and administration responsibilities and the associated costs. In addition, the Agency will create relevant financial and intellectual models and thresholds, as well as have a challenge process for threshold increases in operating budgets and changes to the mix of operating budgets.
People Management Risk The risk that ACOA's talent agenda (i.e. leadership, recruitment, training, promotion, work/life balance, competencies) does not adequately sustain the necessary workforce required to carry out the Agency's mandate in the future and that the Agency experiences a significant loss of corporate memory.	The Agency will identify current and anticipated gaps in the talent agenda and develop a comprehensive plan with targets for timely implementation. This strategy includes mitigation actions such as the development of employee career and learning plans, as well as adopting a proactive approach to Public Service Renewal.
Data Management Risk The risk that data being collected is inaccurate, incomplete, excessive or inaccessible, so that decision making and efficient use of resources is adversely affected.	The Agency has a strategy to enhance its capacity to collect and use performance information for informed decision making at all levels. As part of this strategy the Agency plans to carry out a compilation of all data being collected and determine, with users, if the data is relevant for Agency operations. It will also link data to decision making and performance measurement, and eliminate unused data.
Reputational Risk Reputation risk materializes when the proactive flow of positive information wanes and/or when the negative publicity triggered by certain internal or external events, whether accurate or not, compromises the Agency's reputation and results in a loss of credibility.	ACOA will emphasize the development and application of proactive communications strategies to convey information about the Agency's activities and accomplishments to both internal and external stakeholders. As part of its strategy, the Agency will continue to enhance a Values and Ethics culture and provide rapid response to external enquiries, among other actions.

1.6 Expenditure Profile

Overview

The table on page 20 illustrates the planned spending for the reporting period. While the Agency's spending appears to indicate a downward trend, special adjustment programming (i.e. a one-time initiative in response to the closure of the shipyard in Saint John, New Brunswick) and infrastructure funding through the Infrastructure Canada Program (ICP) will no longer be included in spending. The Saint John Shipyard Adjustment Initiative is being completed, therefore, associated resources are not included in future year spending profiles. Similarly, the ICP is winding down in 2007-2008 and financial resources will no longer be reported under ACOA's reference levels, but rather through Infrastructure Canada, thus explaining the change in programming funds. ACOA will continue to act as a federal delivery partner for the Atlantic region and will play a key role in ensuring that federal government investments are made in public infrastructure in urban and rural communities.

In addition, the Agency's reference levels were impacted by the government-wide Expenditure Review initiatives totalling $30 million over four years that were introduced in 2004-2005 and 2005-2006. From 2008-2009 to 2010-2011, the decreases in planned spending are associated primarily with the sunsetting of programs, for which the Agency will seek renewal.

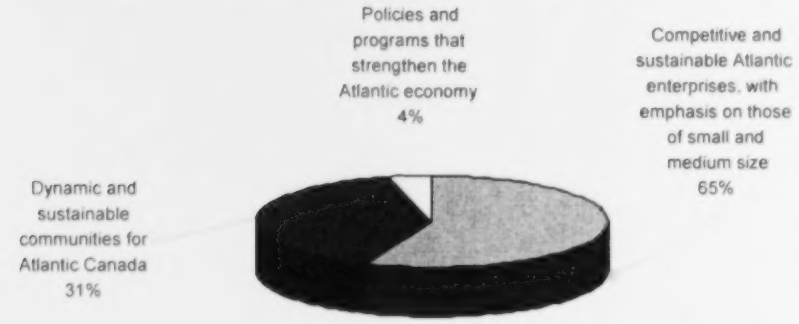
Analysis of planned spending

Planned spending for 2008-2009 of $328.2 million represents a decrease of $42.2 million from forecast spending of $370.4 million in 2007-2008, due primarily to changes in the Special Adjustment Measures and Infrastructure Programming activities of $29.7 million and $11.3 million respectively. Other changes, totalling $1.2 million, include lower operating costs and reduced requirements for transfer payment programs over various program activities.

Planned spending of $321.9 million in 2009-2010 represents a decrease of $6.3 million from 2008-2009, and reflects a change of $2.6 million related to funding for Canada Business, $3.9 million in transfer payment programs related to the collection of repayable contributions, and increased adjustments of $0.2 million.

Planned spending of $288.9 million in 2010-2011 represents a decrease of $33 million in funding available to the Agency; $30 million of this total is related to the sunsetting of funding received through Budget 2005 for the Atlantic Investment Partnership – Round II. An additional $2 million is related to the sunsetting of funding announced in the same budget for the Community Futures Program. Other adjustments total $1 million.

2008-2009 Planned Spending by Strategic Outcome, Expressed as a Percentage


Policies and programs that strengthen the Atlantic economy 4%
Competitive and sustainable Atlantic enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size 65%
Dynamic and sustainable communities for Atlantic Canada 31%

Agency Planned Spending by Program Activity

($ millions)

PROGRAM ACTIVITY	Forecast Spending 2007-2008 Main Estimates 2008-2009 Planned Spending 2009-2010 Planned Spending 2010-2011	Main Estimates and Planned Spending	Adjustments (Planned Spending not in Main Estimates)	Adjusted Spending
Fostering the development of institutions and enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size	2007-2008	205.8	7.1[1]	212.9
	2008-2009	**214.2**	**0.0**	**214.2**
	2009-2010	213.2	(7.0)	206.2
	2010-2011	142.3	41.0	183.3
Fostering the economic development of Atlantic Communities	2007-2008	100.8	0.8	101.6
	2008-2009	**100.9**	**0.0**	**100.9**
	2009-2010	95.6	(3.0)	92.6
	2010-2011	93.4	0.0	93.4
Special Adjustment Measures	2007-2008	40.5	(10.8)[2]	29.7
	2008-2009	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**
	2009-2010	0.0	10.0[3]	10.0
	2010-2011	0.0	0.0	0.0
Infrastructure Programming	2007-2008	5.1	7.1[4]	12.2
	2008-2009	**0.9**	**0.0**	**0.9**
	2009-2010	0.9	0.0	0.9
	2010-2011	0.0	0.0	0.0
Policy	2007-2008	7.7	0.0	7.7
	2008-2009	**5.9**	**0.0**	**5.9**
	2009-2010	5.9	0.0	5.9
	2010-2011	5.9	0.0	5.9
Advocacy	2007-2008	4.1	0.0	4.1
	2008-2009	**4.1**	**0.0**	**4.1**
	2009-2010	4.1	0.0	4.1
	2010-2011	4.1	0.0	4.1
Co-ordination	2007-2008	2.3	(0.1)	2.2
	2008-2009	**2.2**	**0.0**	**2.2**
	2009-2010	2.2	0.0	2.2
	2010-2011	2.2	0.0	2.2
TOTAL	2007-2008	366.3	4.1	370.4
	2008-2009	**328.2**	**0.0**	**328.2**
	2009-2010	321.9	0.0	321.9
	2010-2011	247.9	41.0[5]	288.9

(1) Increase in requirements under the Business Development Program.
(2) Decrease in requirements for the Saint John Shipyard Adjustment Initiative due to delays in project approvals.
(3) See section 2.2.2 for further details.
(4) Increase in requirements under the Infrastructure Canada Program resulting from slippage in project cash flows from previous year.
(5) $41 million ongoing annual funding approved in Budget 2005, pending approval by Treasury Board of reference level adjustment.

Full Time Equivalent	
2007-2008	736
2008-2009	**757**
2009-2010	726
2010-2011	711

The change in full-time equivalents (FTEs) from 757 in 2008-2009 to 726 in 2009-2010 is primarily due to the sunsetting of funding for the Canada Business Service Centres and related 31 FTEs. The change in FTEs from 2009-2010 of 726 to 2010-2011 of 711 is due to the sunsetting of operating funds for infrastructure programming.

Section II – Analysis of Program Activities by Strategic Outcome

2.1 Strategic Outcome 1 – Competitive and sustainable Atlantic enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size

Indicators:	***Five-year Target:*** (2004-2005 to 2008-2009)
Increase in Atlantic GDP related to ACOA clients	$4 to $5 in GDP gains for every $1 of ACOA expenditure

Performance Measurement Strategy: Measuring the impact on income and employment in Atlantic Canada is a long-term, multi-dimensional undertaking. Thus, the Agency will report results every five years, based on analysis of data from Statistics Canada and internal systems, using econometric modelling.

ACOA fulfills its mandate to facilitate the economic transformation of the Atlantic region by enabling the development of sustainable enterprises that provide goods and services beyond local borders and into the global marketplace. This leads to employment growth and wealth creation for the benefit of all the residents of Atlantic Canada.

In 2008-2009, the Agency will use its resources and programs to bring increased focus to improving productivity of Atlantic Canadian companies. Areas such as research and development, acquiring advanced technologies, and improving business and managerial skills will continue to be actively promoted.

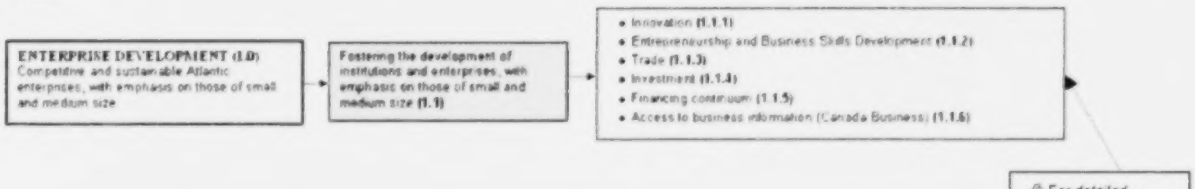
One area of great economic potential is the pursuit of commercialization opportunities within ACOA's Atlantic Innovation Fund (AIF) portfolio. The Agency will implement actions designed to improve the commercialization of the innovative technologies that are being developed by its clients.

In the areas of trade and investment, ACOA will align its efforts with the Government of Canada's Global Commerce Strategy and the related Americas Strategy, and engage in activities that capitalize to a greater extent on emerging markets in Asia such as China and India. The Agency will encourage the development of the Atlantic Gateway, as this presents a strategically important initiative for long-term economic expansion throughout the region.

The Agency will continue to champion sectors recognized as presenting significant opportunity for the long-term success of the Atlantic region. These sectors are aerospace and defence, aquaculture, bioscience, energy, green technologies and resource industries.

By helping individual SMEs in both rural and urban settings to improve their competitiveness, the Agency delivers on this strategic outcome. ACOA focuses on delivering constantly evolving and adapted programs that support the development of SMEs and that better the business environment in which these businesses grow and mature.

2.1.1 Program Activity: Fostering the development of institutions and enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size


ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (1.0)
Competitive and sustainable Atlantic enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size
Fostering the development of institutions and enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size (1.1)
• Innovation (1.1.1)
• Entrepreneurship and Business Skills Development (1.1.2)
• Trade (1.1.3)
• Investment (1.1.4)
• Financing continuum (1.1.5)
• Access to business information (Canada Business) (1.1.6)

For detailed information on any of these Program Sub-Activities, please click on the link: http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/e/library/reports/rpp2009/index.shtml

Expected Results: Improved growth and competitiveness of Atlantic SMEs

Indicators:	***Annual Target:*** *(2008-2009)*
• Survival rate of ACOA-assisted firms versus non-assisted firms	• Ratio of 1 to 2
• # of new business start-ups that have received funding from ACOA to help them become established	• 50

Performance Measurement Strategy: Analysis of data from Statistics Canada and internal systems data.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (Full-time Equivalents)		
2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
214.2	206.2	183.3	446	415	415

ACOA undertakes a variety of activities, through a range of targeted initiatives, to achieve its objective of fostering the development of the business environment for competitive and sustainable SMEs. The Agency is a catalyst of development, whether through direct financial support to SMEs and R&D organizations, or indirect support by helping industry associations create a better business environment in the region. It assists existing and new entrepreneurs, helps attract foreign direct investments to Atlantic Canada, and promotes the development of the financing market for SMEs. ACOA is at work to create the best conditions possible for SMEs to start, grow and expand.

Innovation: In 2008-2009, ACOA will work to maximize the impact of its investment, particularly in sectors that are strategically important to the long-term success of the Atlantic region. While continuing to support R&D projects that have the best probability for successful commercialization, increased focus will be placed on identifying and pursuing

commercialization opportunities within the existing AIF portfolio. ACOA will also work with its partners and stakeholders to align investments in key sectors in the Atlantic region, in order to build upon emerging clusters in both urban and rural areas of Atlantic Canada. As well, the Agency will work to promote the region's capacity to carry out leading-edge R&D in specialized areas or in specific sectors at the regional, national and international levels.

Entrepreneurship and Business Skills Development: Increased productivity is directly linked to improved business skills. By investing in the development of business skills and providing opportunities to gain practical experience, ACOA is investing in the region's economic capacity and competitiveness. Working in conjunction with not-for-profit organizations, the Agency provides entrepreneurs with access to courses, networking opportunities, and business counselling and coaching services. ACOA also helps to fund opportunities for people, youth especially, to explore entrepreneurship as a career option, thereby ensuring a future pool of Atlantic Canadian entrepreneurs. Through a variety of means, from summer camps to one-on-one mentoring, aspiring and existing entrepreneurs are able to acquire and put into practice the key aptitudes required to start, sustain or grow their businesses.

Trade: In 2008-2009, the Agency will reposition its efforts to align itself with national priorities outlined within the Global Commerce Strategy, in order to take full advantage of globalization opportunities. Through this alignment, the Agency will capitalize on new priorities and emerging opportunities, while continuing to provide value-added trade programming that will increase the productivity and competitiveness of SMEs within the region. The high value of the Canadian dollar makes it imperative for the Agency to consider new export opportunities for Atlantic Canadian SMEs, including the Americas Strategy, Atlantic Gateway, International Technology Development and the continued development of key priority sectors (aerospace and defence, aquaculture, life sciences, energy and environmental technologies). The Agency will continue to work both directly and in partnership with other federal departments and the four provincial governments to deliver its strategic approach to trade development. This approach is to focus on four strategic elements (awareness; trade education and skills development; capacity building; and policy co-ordination and partnerships) and will ensure the incorporation of the new, key initiatives identified above. Furthermore, each of the programming elements will place a stronger emphasis on productivity and competitiveness in order to ensure maximum export growth for SMEs throughout the region.

Investment: ACOA works to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) into Atlantic Canada (i.e. encourage foreign-owned corporations to establish operations in Atlantic Canada). FDI creates employment opportunities, generates revenues and increases innovation, productivity and export trade. This is achieved by diversifying and strengthening economic development, by investing in public infrastructure and building the industrial critical mass required to successfully compete in a global economy. The Agency will continue to play an important leadership and co-ordination role through research, information dissemination, awareness and promotion, investment partnerships and lead development. ACOA is instrumental in promoting "Atlantic Canada as a Profitable Place to do Business." Going forward, ACOA will increase its efforts in priority areas such as energy, innovation, bioscience, and aerospace and defence and will focus on investment opportunities within new regional and federal initiatives such as the Atlantic Gateway Strategy, the North American Platform Program (NAPP), and the Americas Strategy.

Financing Continuum: The Agency promotes the development of the financing continuum for the SMEs of Atlantic Canada. During 2008-2009, ACOA will continue to provide direct assistance to selected areas of activities such as start-up, expansion and modernization of business, as there continues to be gaps in the financing available to SMEs, both in rural and urban areas of Atlantic Canada. The Agency will also continue to support projects such as the GrowthWorks Atlantic Venture Fund and the First Angel Network Association, because these organizations present much-needed, new sources of equity capital for SMEs.

Access to Business Information (Canada Business): Canada Business acts as a focal point for information on government services, programs and regulations. The service is provided free of charge via phone, walk-in centres and website. A key objective for 2008-2009 will be to sustain high levels of client satisfaction. This will entail improvements to the quality of information products offered and enhancements to the website, making it easier to find and use information. As well, a strategic review will be undertaken to develop a renewed service strategy that could be implemented in the 2009-2010 fiscal year. By reducing the complexity of dealing with various levels of government, Canada Business services support the federal government's objective of reducing paper burden and fostering productivity.

2.2 Strategic Outcome 2 – Dynamic and sustainable communities for Atlantic Canada

Indicators:	***Five-year Targets:*** *(2004-2005 to 2008-2009)*
• Increase capacity in community decision making, planning and delivery	• Evidence of impact resulting from evaluations
	Annual Target: *(2008-2009)*
• Survival rate of rural businesses	• Stabilize or increase survival rate of rural businesses

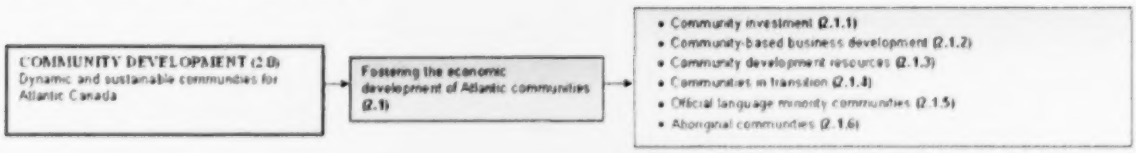
Performance Measurement Strategy: Analysis of data from evaluations and Statistics Canada.

The Atlantic Canadian economy is built on the region's many geographic, linguistic and cultural communities. From small, remote villages to larger urban centres, economic opportunities and challenges vary significantly.

To respond to these varying community needs, ACOA must be flexible and responsive to working with communities to pursue economic development in a collaborative fashion. ACOA will take a balanced approach in supporting strategies to increase opportunities in the region's rural and urban areas, by investing in initiatives that will provide best value for investment, while addressing community priorities. Community development is a bottom-up process that helps develop the tools, resources and initiatives that support unique strategic development.

By taking a holistic approach, based on the realities of a given community, ACOA can foster economic development by supporting Atlantic Canadian communities in their efforts to develop the resources they need to take full responsibility for their own economic development. As always, ACOA will work in co-operation with other levels of government, other federal government departments, non-government organizations, and community groups to leverage support and co-ordinate economic development that will strengthen the rural economy. Healthy businesses in rural communities contribute to employment creation and increase earned incomes in these regions.

2.2.1 Program Activity: Fostering the economic development of Atlantic communities


COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (2.0)
Dynamic and sustainable communities for Atlantic Canada
Fostering the economic development of Atlantic communities (2.1)
• Community investment (2.1.1)
• Community-based business development (2.1.2)
• Community development resources (2.1.3)
• Communities in transition (2.1.4)
• Official language minority communities (2.1.5)
• Aboriginal communities (2.1.6)

Expected Results: Enhanced business and economic opportunities for Atlantic Canadian communities; enhanced community collaborations

Indicators:	***Annual Targets:*** *(2008-2009)*
• # of business start-ups	• 583
• Number of businesses that have received funding to stabilize or expand operations	• 771
• Dollars leveraged for community development projects/investments	• $98.0 million
• Longevity/quality of collaborations in community development planning and implementation (2010 ICF)	• Evidence of impact resulting from evaluations and supported by data

Performance Measurement Strategy: Analysis of CBDC report data and internal systems data.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (Full-time Equivalents)		
2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
100.9	92.6	93.4	186	185	186

In 2008-2009, ACOA will continue to work in co-operation with communities, making strategic investments to capitalize on opportunities for sustainable economic growth and to build community development capacity. In doing so, ACOA will invest in the development of critical economic development infrastructure. These investments capitalize on the capacity, strengths and opportunities present in the community, as identified in community economic development plans and strategies.

ACOA's main tool for community investment is the Innovative Communities Fund (ICF). This fund invests in strategic projects that build the economies of Atlantic Canadian communities; it focuses on projects that lead to long-term employment and economic capacity building. ACOA works with non-commercial/not-for-profit organizations to diversify and enhance the economies of Atlantic Canadian communities. These include local development associations, municipalities and their agencies, business or technology institutes, industry/sector associations, economic development associations, local co-operatives, universities and educational institutions. The fund capitalizes on opportunities and strengths that exist in these communities to develop competitive and productive, strategic industry sectors. The fund works to strengthen a community's infrastructure and invests in projects that enhance a community's capacity to overcome economic development challenges. The ICF encourages partnership between

communities and stakeholders to identify opportunities for sustainable economic growth. It has a strong focus on rural communities, where development needs are numerous.

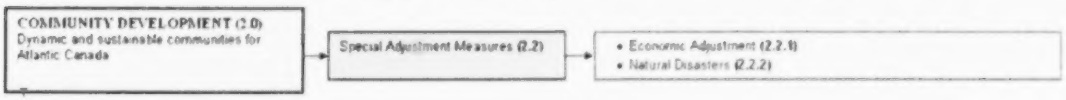
ACOA continues to fund 41 Community Business Development Corporations (CBDCs) in rural Atlantic Canada, through the Community Futures Program. These CBDCs are run by community-based boards of directors focused on local community economic development. Contributions permit the CBDCs to provide an essential source of investment capital for rural small businesses. They also offer business counselling and skills development opportunities that support community economic development and build the self-reliance and capacity communities need to realize their full potential. ACOA works with the CBDCs and urban-based business support organizations to assist Atlantic Canadians, through the Seed Capital Program. This allows borrowers to acquire business skills and capital needed to start, modernize and expand their businesses.

In co-operation with other levels of government, ACOA continues to support 52 Regional Economic Development Organizations (REDOs) in Atlantic Canada. REDOs are responsible for the co-ordination, development and implementation of strategic economic development at the local and regional levels. In support of these activities, ACOA invests in annual operational funding for the REDOs, which develop and implement strategic plans in rural communities. REDOs are mandated to achieve results through community development efforts, including strategic community development planning, and business development activities; such activities often lead to community-based projects. The resulting strategic plans assist communities in assessing their strengths and weaknesses in order to implement strategic initiatives that will contribute to the economic growth of their regions. REDOs are managed by volunteer boards of directors representative of the communities they serve.

ACOA is also committed to economic development in both the French-language community and Aboriginal communities in Atlantic Canada. The Agency continues to collaborate with Acadian and Francophone organizations across the region to enable the official language minority community to engage in activities that foster sustainable community infrastructure necessary for economic development in these communities. In addition, ACOA continues to make progress in identifying increased opportunities for Aboriginal economic development and in developing a more co-ordinated approach, both internally and in partnership with other federal departments.

Finally, tourism plays an important role in the social and economic development and diversification of communities in Atlantic Canada. The Agency will continue to support initiatives that integrate tourism development within community planning.

2.2.2 Program Activity: Special Adjustment Measures


COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (2.0)
Dynamic and sustainable communities for Atlantic Canada
Special Adjustment Measures (2.2)
• Economic Adjustment (2.2.1)
• Natural Disasters (2.2.2)

Expected Results: Reduced impact of economic crisis

Indicator:	***Annual Target:*** *(2008-2009)*
• Presence of new/diversified economic activity	• As determined by the objectives of each program

Performance Measurement Strategy: Evaluation of data from studies, surveys and internal evaluations.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (Full-time Equivalents)		
2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
0	10.0[1]	0	0	1	0

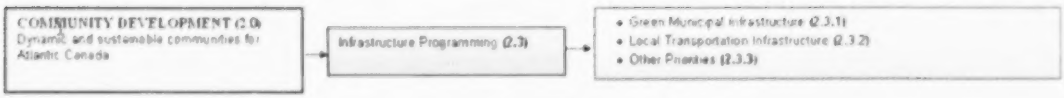
(1) The SJSAI has recently been extended and adjustments in planned spending between ACOA's program activities may need to be considered in 2009-2010.

There are circumstances in which communities face severe economic adjustment impacts due to changing economic circumstances. If it is determined that the shock is so great there is a need for adjustment measures in a community or a region to mitigate the impact, specific measures will be undertaken when additional funding is received apart from existing reference levels. These measures are based on the appropriation of new funds that are delivered through ACOA. Each special adjustment measure has specific objectives, clients and performance measures. These measures support initiatives designed to address the specific economic needs of Atlantic Canadian communities.

ACOA has been asked in the past, for example, to deliver adjustment programs that responded to the closure of military bases, the closure of the cod fishery, and the termination of the ferry service between New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

Typically, targeted funding is available for adjustments to reduce or lessen the impact of economic downturns in the region, ultimately resulting in the lessening of what would otherwise have been economic crisis. Currently, the only targeted adjustment program being delivered by ACOA is the Saint John Shipyard Adjustment Initiative (SJSAI), in response to the closure of a privately owned shipyard, which was a major employer and economic contributor in Saint John, New Brunswick.

2.2.3 Program Activity: Infrastructure Programming


COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (2.0)
Dynamic and sustainable communities for Atlantic Canada
Infrastructure Programming (2.3)
• Green Municipal Infrastructure (2.3.1)
• Local Transportation Infrastructure (2.3.2)
• Other Priorities (2.3.3)

Expected Results: Federal government investments in public infrastructure in urban and rural communities

Indicator:	***Annual Target:*** *(2008-2009)*
• $ leveraged for approved projects	• $77.7 million

Performance Measurement Strategy: Analysis of data from Shared Information Management System for Infrastructure (SIMSI).

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (Full-time Equivalents)		
2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
0.9	0.9	0	15	15	0

The provision and maintenance of quality public infrastructure provides the foundation for economic development and is critical for economic prosperity. Providing and effectively managing potable water, waste treatment facilities, highways, municipal roads and bridges, and transit systems, all impact on economic growth; many also have strong environmental implications. This requires programming designed to renew and build infrastructure in rural and urban municipalities in Atlantic Canada, through investments that protect the environment and support long-term economic growth. ACOA, working with Infrastructure Canada and the provinces, oversees and ensures the flow of federal funds allocated to each region through the various infrastructure funding streams.

Infrastructure programming enhances municipal infrastructure in urban and rural communities throughout Atlantic Canada. ACOA is the federal entity responsible for delivering and implementing the Government of Canada's current infrastructure programming in the Atlantic region. The majority of infrastructure projects are funded by Infrastructure Canada (the funding agent). In past years, infrastructure programming was funded through the Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) and the Infrastructure Canada Program (ICP). As these funding programs are now fully committed, ACOA will be active in the delivery of a new round of funding under the Building Canada Fund (BCF).

The BCF is to be governed through a contribution agreement with each province. The total federal portion of funding for the BCF is expected to flow over ten years, starting in 2008. ACOA will enter into a partnership agreement with Infrastructure Canada, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will identify ACOA's role in program administration and project selection. Although ACOA is responsible to ensure due diligence in

approving and processing payment claims, these funds are not reflected in ACOA reference levels as they will be accessed through other existing mechanisms. The grants and contributions component of these funds will be reported through Infrastructure Canada. ACOA's operational cost to deliver this programming will be reflected in financial adjustments once agreements with Infrastructure Canada are finalized.

Green municipal infrastructure continues to be a priority, and the provincial agreements actually identify an investment target for green projects. This essentially includes water and wastewater systems, water management, solid waste management and recycling. Agreements are in place in all four Atlantic Provinces and memorandums of understanding have been executed between Infrastructure Canada (part of the Transport, Infrastructure and Communities portfolio) and ACOA to facilitate delivery.

Local transportation infrastructure projects are defined as those that improve the efficiency of and integration of Canada's transportation networks to facilitate the flow of goods and services, including public transit, urban/arterial roads, regional /local airports, short-line rail, short-sea shipping and core national highway systems.

Finally, ACOA focuses on other priorities relating to key infrastructure projects that will lead to building a stronger and better Canada through modern, world-class public infrastructure. Projects may include those related to connectivity and broadband, cultural and sport.

2.3 Strategic Outcome 3 – Policies and programs that strengthen the Atlantic economy

Indicator:	***Annual Targets:*** (2008-2009)
• Atlantic regional programs/initiatives implemented or adjusted as a result of ACOA's policy, advocacy and co-ordination work	• Continued government support of Agency priorities, collaboration with other federal departments, and engagement with other partners in Atlantic Canada in areas that will contribute to increasing the competitiveness of Atlantic Canada's economy

Performance Measurement Strategy: Analysis of information from ACOA's Policy Network and key informant survey, as well as indicators from the federal government's budget speech, Speech from the Throne, and decisions by central agencies.

ACOA's legislated mandate situates the Agency's policy, advocacy and co-ordination (PAC) roles as central to identifying opportunities and challenges facing the regional economy. Policy, advocacy and co-ordination exist to inform and support decision making by the Agency and the Minister, providing intelligence, analysis and well-grounded advice on a broad range of issues and topics. PAC helps carry the Agency's forward agenda, plays an integral role in developing focused and adaptable approaches to issues, and helps ensure that ACOA overall remains relevant to the opportunities and challenges in Atlantic Canada.

The three PAC functions are interrelated. Policy is at the centre of the relationship, as it provides the research, analysis and advice needed to help define the forward agenda and plan future regional development approaches tailored to Atlantic Canadian circumstances. This policy work supports and promotes advocacy efforts with other federal departments, provincial governments, and other organizations to ensure that national policies and programs reflect realities and opportunities in Atlantic Canada. ACOA's co-ordination initiatives are also linked to policy and involve close collaboration with a variety of stakeholders including provincial governments, business groups, other federal entities and other organizations such as economic think tanks.

ACOA is a highly recognized element of the federal presence in the Atlantic region, and has a responsibility to reflect and promote federal priorities, particularly as they relate to regional economic development. Many of the commitments and priorities that the Government of Canada has put forth speak to challenges and opportunities that ACOA and its partners are working to address. The region's productivity, changing demographics, resource production and processing realities, the creation and application of new and emerging technologies, and changes in global trade and investment represent some of the key economic issues being advanced by ACOA.

ACOA is actively working to identify the means to raise productivity levels in Atlantic Canada. This will require improvements in skills levels throughout the region as well as increased innovation and R&D, and capital investment.

As stated in *Advantage Canada*, improving conditions for business involves improving their global competitiveness. In order to improve Atlantic Canada's competitiveness, ACOA must look at ways of supporting and fostering increased innovation and commercialization practices among its industries and businesses. The Agency provides analysis and research support, advocates on behalf of the region, and works with its partners and stakeholders to address this priority issue.

The region's resource industries face crucial challenges. Much of Atlantic Canada's economic development has been driven by its natural resources, including minerals, energy, fish, forestry and agriculture. However, to remain globally competitive, resource-based industries must look at repositioning to integrate more knowledge content so they can deliver more value-added production, better jobs, higher value exports, and more resilient rural communities. The application of science and technology is important not only to the extraction of resources, but also to their transformation into usable and marketable products.

It is increasingly understood that Atlantic Canada's competitors are not next door, but around the world. The 2007 Speech from the Throne specifically identifies the Atlantic Gateway as a driver of new investments in transport and trade hubs. The development of the Gateway is an important factor in Atlantic Canada's competitiveness, and continues to be a key priority for ACOA in terms of sustainable regional economic growth and the region's contribution to enhanced national economic productivity and global competitiveness. ACOA will continue to work with its national and regional partners to develop the Atlantic Gateway Strategy, and to ensure that regional and national stakeholders are engaged in this endeavour.

These priorities are among the key sectoral and horizontal issues on which the Agency will focus its policy, advocacy and co-ordination efforts during 2008-2009. Included in these priorities are the Agency's current priority advocacy files: aquaculture; bioscience; science and technology; energy; environment; Atlantic Gateway; aerospace and defence; commercialization; population and immigration; and resource industries. In developing and advancing these advocacy files, ACOA will continue to engage other policy stakeholders and work in partnership with other public and private sector stakeholders while advocating the Atlantic region's interests at the national level.

2.3.1 Program Activity: Policy

POLICY, ADVOCACY AND CO-ORDINATION (3.0)
Policies and programs that strengthen the Atlantic economy
Policy (3.1)
Policy analysis and advice (3.1.1)
Economic analysis (3.1.2)
Policy research (3.1.3)
Engagement (3.1.4)

Expected Results: Strategic, researched policy decisions reflecting opportunities and challenges of the Atlantic region's economy, while considering enterprise and community development potential

Indicators:

- Extent to which policy analysis and research projects are useful and/or provided to input decision making with respect to Atlantic regional economic development including enterprise and community development supports and services

Annual Targets: *(2008-2009)*

- Continue to provide sound advice to decision makers based on environmental scanning, issue analysis and research related to Atlantic Canada economic development issues and opportunities

Performance Measurement Strategy: Annual analysis of information from project reports, qualitative file reviews, key informant survey managed by the Agency's policy network, and Atlantic Policy Research Initiative reports. Longer term measurement will be accomplished via formal evaluations.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (Full-time Equivalents)		
2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
5.9	5.9	5.9	41	41	41

Policy provides a well-grounded base of understanding for the development of the Agency's strategic priorities and initiatives, program design, and input into national policy development and federal-provincial relations. This function is supported by internal and external research, in part delivered by a dedicated ACOA fund, the Atlantic Policy Research Initiative (APRI). The policy function is carried out by officials at the Agency's head office, its regional offices, and in Ottawa. Policy work is delivered through four sub-activities.

- Policy Analysis and Advice: Provides ongoing analysis of challenges and opportunities, trends, emerging approaches and best practices, in order to present decision makers with well-founded policy options or longer term strategies.
- Economic Analysis: Provides analysis of the economic fundamentals that underpin the policy development process of the Agency. Analysis of the regional economies and current economic conditions is done on a continuous basis, and research is conducted on various strategic economic issues.
- Policy Research: The research function targets key priority areas such as innovation, commercialization and competitiveness, and seeks to actively involve regional and national public and private sector stakeholders. In addition to undertaking research in support of the strategic advice and information to assist decision makers in the public and private sectors, ACOA's APRI provides a mechanism to conduct research on socio-economic issues affecting Atlantic Canada.

- Engagement: Provides an opportunity for leaders from government, private sector and academia to participate in dialogue on key socio-economic issues affecting Atlantic Canada and the country. Policy round tables, strategically focused conferences, and presentations on subjects aligned with current priorities are some of the mechanisms used to engage stakeholders on Atlantic issues.

In 2008-2009, ACOA intends to focus its policy work on the following key areas: the Atlantic Gateway; trade research and analysis; regional productivity and competitiveness issues, mainly facing resource industries; skills, labour force and population concerns; science and technology strategies and approaches for the region, including innovation and commercialization; and rural/urban issues. The Agency's policy activities also support the work of the Advocacy Champions and feed into co-ordination activities.

A number of engagement initiatives will be pursued regionally, nationally and internationally. In 2008-2009, ACOA's policy function will engage with the newly appointed private sector member of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Board. The Agency will support Canada's lead representative on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Territorial Development Policy Committee for a two-year mandate, and will engage with the private sector and academia on initiatives such as Atlantica and Metropolis.

2.3.2 Program Activity: Advocacy

POLICY, ADVOCACY AND CO-ORDINATION (3.0)
Policies and programs that strengthen the Atlantic economy
Advocacy (3.2)
Sectoral capacity building (3.2.1)
Horizontal issues capacity building (3.2.2)
Agenda management (3.2.3)

Expected Results: Federal policies and programs that reflect Atlantic enterprise and community development needs and interests

Indicator:	***Annual Target:*** *(2008-2009)*
• Impact of Agency positions taken with respect to national policy and programs and the government's capital procurement agenda	• Demonstrated linkages between ACOA's Advocacy priorities, federal government agenda and documented needs in Atlantic Canada

Performance Measurement Strategy: An evaluation will be conducted to determine the impact of ACOA's advocacy work. This will be a qualitative assessment based on document review, stakeholder feedback and/or consultations.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (Full-time Equivalents)		
2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
4.1	4.1	4.1	36	36	36

ACOA's advocacy function aims to advance the region's interests in national policy and program development in order to ensure that government initiatives are responsive to the needs of Atlantic Canada. This is achieved by directing the attention of central agencies and other government departments to gaps in national programs and seeking their support of more

effective approaches to addressing Atlantic Canada's economic issues. ACOA also assists Atlantic Canadian firms to be better positioned to access public sector procurement, support and services.

Effective promotion of Atlantic Canada's interests is accomplished through environmental scanning and active monitoring of federal government priorities for linkages and impacts. This, in turn, alerts government officials to emerging issues and provides information about Atlantic Canada to central agencies and other government departments and Cabinet, while influencing the government's procurement agenda.

Since early 2005, the Agency has focused its advocacy efforts on key priorities, each led by a champion and reflecting both Atlantic Canadian priorities and the federal agenda. For 2008-2009, ACOA's priorities include: aerospace and defence; aquaculture; science, technology and commercialization; energy; population and immigration; the Atlantic Gateway; bioscience; environment; and resource industries.

The aerospace and defence priority serves to promote Atlantic Canadian companies for major federal procurement projects within the federal industrial regional benefits (IRBs) policy. For 2008-2009, ACOA will focus on strengthening the sector by increasing efforts to create international networks and partnerships, raise awareness of federal procurement opportunities and encourage collaboration among stakeholders. The Agency will continue to monitor the ongoing development of federal procurement policies from a regional perspective.

Aquaculture is an industry of strategic importance to Atlantic Canada. It represents opportunities for wealth generation, employment creation, and diversification for the region's rural and coastal communities. In 2008-2009, the Agency's focus will continue to be on innovation, R&D and commercialization of new technologies. In addition, the Agency will work closely with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), the Atlantic provincial governments and industry on the development and implementation of aquaculture renewal initiatives. These initiatives will address the needs of the industry, as identified through various aquaculture networks, and provide the environment required for growth.

The Agency will work with Industry Canada and other federal departments to implement the Federal Science and Technology strategy. In particular, ACOA will work with the Business Development Bank, the Natural Science and Engineering Research Council and the National Research Council to broaden their alignment exercise to include ACOA activities and to better improve commercialization outcomes in Atlantic Canada.

The Agency will focus its interventions in the energy sector on the development of strategies and concrete actions to attract investment, strengthen the ability of the supply sector to compete in new commercial activities at home and abroad, and stimulate the creation of new technologies to overcome exploration and development obstacles unique to Atlantic Canada. This focus will also emphasize the potential of emerging alternative energy industries and seek to increase awareness of the investment opportunities they represent.

In 2008-2009, the Agency will continue to collaborate with federal-provincial governments to address demographic challenges facing Atlantic Canada. Activities will include working with lead federal departments to educate them on realities within Atlantic Canada related to skills development strategies that will enhance post-secondary education, train workers to respond to the knowledge-based economy, and retrain older workers to participate more effectively in the workforce.

Federal priorities that relate to economic development include a comprehensive long-term plan for infrastructure. ACOA will proceed with the implementation of an integrated Atlantic Gateway complement to the National Framework for Strategic Gateways and Trade Corridors.

The emerging bioscience sector remains a priority for the Agency. Atlantic Canada has an excellent record of research and development in health sciences, fish growth science, and food processing, which will serve as a solid foundation for future growth. The focus of advocacy activity will be to engage the other federal departments and stakeholders to support and grow the bioscience sector in Atlantic Canada.

ACOA will develop strategies and plans, within the government's environmental agenda, to identify emerging technologies and new trade and investment opportunities for this sector in Atlantic Canada. This approach will require close collaboration between the Agency, other federal departments, the private sector and the academic community.

A significant portion of the economy in Atlantic Canada relies on the viability of its natural resources. These industries need help to reposition themselves so they can better meet market demands within a global economy. The Agency will engage stakeholders to help identify the means to diversify the region's renewable resource base, which includes forestry, fishery/aquaculture and agriculture. Specific interventions will focus on increasing productivity levels and moving toward higher end products and services.

2.3.3 Program Activity: Co-ordination

POLICY, ADVOCACY AND CO-ORDINATION (3.0)
Policies and programs that strengthen the Atlantic economy
Co-ordination (3.3)
• Federal-provincial relations (3.3.1)
• Federal Regional Councils (3.3.2)
• Other government departments efforts in regional development (3.3.3)

Expected Results: Co-ordination of federal policies and programs within the region to form integrated approaches to development

Indicators:	***Target:***
• Joint strategic initiatives that reflect common positions on defined enterprise and community issues	• Develop strategic initiatives through collaborative efforts with other federal/provincial partners on issues such as population, productivity and competitiveness and access to capital

Performance Measurement Strategy: Annual targets will be measured through analysis of data from project reports, qualitative file reviews, ACOA's Policy Network and the Privy Council Office (Intergovernmental Affairs). Five-year targets will be measured through an evaluation approach.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (Full-time Equivalents)		
2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
2.2	2.2	2.2	33	33	33

The Agency is mandated by its legislation to "[co-ordinate] policies and programs of the Government of Canada in relation to opportunities for economic development of Atlantic Canada." ACOA engages a range of economic partners to address the economic priorities of the Atlantic region through a coherent and collaborative approach to development.

- Federal-provincial relations: ACOA works with the four Atlantic provincial governments, either bilaterally with individual provinces, or multi-laterally (Atlantic-wide) to identify common goals and priorities, facilitate joint research, and co-ordinate the delivery of economic development programs and services.
- Regional Federal Councils: To help maintain effective linkages and partnerships that co-ordinate departments' action in the regions, ACOA works with key federal departments through the Federal Regional Councils, whose mandate includes the integration of improved service delivery, two-way communication with central agencies on regional perspectives and federal initiatives, and co-operation with other jurisdictions, including provincial governments. In 2008-2009, these councils will address an array of topics relevant to the region, including Public Service Renewal (New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island); Official Languages (Newfoundland and Labrador); the Treasury Board Secretariat's Pathfinder Pilot Project (Nova Scotia); organizing forums on Aboriginal Issues (Newfoundland and Labrador); and Service Delivery Modernization
- Other government departments' efforts in regional development: ACOA works collaboratively with other federal departments to strengthen integrated federal approaches

to regional development, increase federal capacity and delivery in the regions, and better align regional development priorities with the federal (national) agenda.

Challenges facing the region's economic growth due to population decline and aging will drive ACOA and its partners to move forward on initiatives related to promoting Atlantic Canada as a business destination, attracting new businesses, and undertaking new research in 2008-2009. ACOA will continue to explore joint approaches to issues with the Atlantic Provinces, via organizational mechanism such as the federal-provincial Senior Officials Committee (SOC), as well as the Regional Officials Committee for the Atlantic Gateway, which is now charged with developing a Gateway Strategy. Other multi-level collaborations with the provinces will continue on common issues of importance to various parts of the Atlantic region, such as tourism and ocean technology in Newfoundland and Labrador.

ACOA's relationship with other federal bodies based in Atlantic Canada is important. Frequent consultation with central agencies will continue, as well as co-ordination and collaboration on senior-level federal outreach sessions and issue-specific discussions on priority areas. Discussions with other regional development agencies will continue to ensure a co-ordinated approach to regional development issues and challenges that affect all regions of the country.

Section III: Supplementary Information

3.1 Links to Additional Information

Organizational Information (Structure and Responsibilities):
http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/e/about/people.shtml

Additional information on ACOA's Program Activity Architecture **sub-activities** for Strategic Outcome 1: Competitive and sustainable Atlantic Enterprises, with emphasis on those of small and medium size.

*The following information is available on ACOA's website at http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/e/library/reports/rpp2009/index.shtml.

Program Sub-activities

1. Innovation
2. Entrepreneurship and Business Skills Development
3. Trade
4. Investment
5. Financing continuum
6. Access to business information (Canada Business)

3.2 Tables

*All electronic tables under section 3.2 of ACOA's *2008-2009 Report on Plans and Priorities* can also be found on the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's website at http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/est-pre/20082009/p3a_e.asp.

3.2.1 Table: Sustainable Development Strategy

ACOA's *Sustainable Development Strategy 2007-2010 – Moving Forward on Sustainable Development* responds to feedback from both external and internal consultations to promote the use of innovative eco-efficiency tools, practices and technologies, and to inform both the private sector and communities of the benefits of sustainable development.

ACOA impacts sustainable development through:

- policies and programs that inform and fund private sector businesses;
- support for research and development that leads to commercialization of new technology;
- support to communities through infrastructure program funding; and
- the efficiency of its internal operations.

ACOA's SDS 2007-2010 is available at:
http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/e/sustain/2006/index.shtml.

3.2.2 Table: Details on Transfer Payment Programs

Information templates have been completed regarding each transfer payment program where total transfer payments will exceed $5 million in 2008-2009.

1. Atlantic Innovation Fund
2. Business Development Program
3. Community Futures Program
4. Innovative Communities Fund

Further information on these projects can be found at http://www.tbs-sct.gc.caest-pre20082009/p3a_e.asp.

3.2.3 Table: Horizontal Initiatives

Horizontal initiatives for which ACOA acts as the lead partner:

Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership (ACTP)
http://www.actp-ptca.ca/

International Business Development Program (IBDP)
http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/e/ibda/index.shtml

Team Canada Atlantic (TCA)
http://www.teamcanadaatlantic.ca/

Other horizontal initiatives for which ACOA acts as a partner:

Canadian Rural Partnership
http://rural.gc.ca/home_e.phtml

Team Canada Inc. (TCI)
http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/ac-ca/progs/rc-tr/progs/canada-inc/index_e.cfm

Building Canada Fund (BCF)
Infrastructure Canada Program (ICP)
Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund (CSIF)
Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF)
http://www.infrastructurecanada.gc.ca/ip-pi/index_e.shtml

Enhanced Representation Initiative (ERI)
http://webapps.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/minpub/Publication.asp?publication_id=380348&Language=E

Canada Business Service Centres (CBSCs)
http://www.cbsc.org/

Information on these (and all other) Government of Canada horizontal initiatives can be found on the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Horizontal Results Database at http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rma/eppi-ibdrp/hrdb-rhbd/profil_e.asp.

3.2.4 Table: Evaluations

3.2.5 Table: Internal Audits

3.2.6 Table: Green Procurement

3.2.7 Table: Sources of Non-respendable Revenue

3.3 Other Items of Interest

*The following information is available on ACOA's website at http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/e/library/reports/rpp2009/index.shtml.

3.3.1 Tourism Sector

3.3.2 Atlantic Canada's economy in 2007

3.3.3 BDP Repayable Contribution Portfolio

3.3.4 Results-Based Management

3.3.5 Client-centred Service

Information on ACOA's biennial corporate client satisfaction surveys, can be found at: http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/e/about/service/index.shtml.